

From: Alison Armstrong [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 August 2021 14:22
To: localplans@charnwood.gov.uk
Subject: re Charnwood local plan Pre-submission Draft 2021-2037
Attachments: Revised Charnwood neighbourhood plan.docx

Please find attached my comments on the plans.

I have commented about Cossington as that is the village I live in and your strategies are not aligned with the plans for our village.

I would be grateful for an acknowledgement of receipt of this email.

Alison Armstrong



9th August 2021.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re Charnwood local plan pre submission draft 2021-2037.

You asked for comments re the above plan. I will make comments regarding Cossington [REDACTED]
Currently I strongly oppose the plan as it stands for Cossington, as the plans are in contradiction to the development strategies and principles in the plans you have drawn up.

Most of what I have said I said in the request for comments on the original plan – but I cannot see that anything has been attended to – so will restate.

- 1) **I accept that there is a need for housing**, however not at the expense of destroying the character of the place where they are built (which is why the current residents live there), nor by overwhelming the place which would destroy its character. Surely it should be in proportion to the size of the place – eg Queniborough is only allocated 155 houses for is 972 houses an increase of only 18%. **The housing development for Cossington will overwhelm us and singles us out from all other such villages in Charnwood.**
 - The number of houses you have allocated Cossington is 130 – this has risen since the previous plan (where it was 110) it constitutes an increase in housing of over 70%. **This will overwhelm the village.** No other village in the borough is faced with this – Thrussington has about 600 residents and better facilities than we do – as compared to 480 in Cossington yet they are only allocated 90 houses. If we had parity with Thrussington that would only be 70 houses, or parity with Queniborough that would be 30 houses.
- 2) **You mention the importance of having vibrant communities where people want to live.**
 - a. You mention the importance of local centres with shops, services and local facilities (development strategy 2 and 3), that places should have schools, health centres, recreation centres and community buildings (9.1 on page 203). I agree with this, but **Cossington does not have these – see b. You will be creating a dormitory not a community with the consequent deterioration in health (mental and physical) you strive to avoid in your development strategy principles**
 - b. **Cossington school is full** with a waiting list and local children already being driven to other schools, there is **no health centre in the village** – people go to Syston or Sileby – and drive. **We have no shop for even basics** (unlike Thrussington), the shops in Sileby or even the Coop in Rothley are over a mile away and do not have half the selection of nearby Syston – so people go out of the village by car to where they wish to shop. **We have a recreation centre with a narrow path to it which is not suitable for buggies** and we have no swings or slides. **Our only community building is small, has asbestos in it and will need demolition soon, there are no catering facilities in it** and it would not hold the current village population never mind the increase. Currently most village events happen in one private house with a rumpus room, it would not be large enough for the increase in population. The village

centre planned for over 20 years has not yet been funded and who knows if it will go ahead. **I note your plans only include the proviso of increased school facilities and increase of the GP in Sileby. You make no plans for a recreation centre for children nor is there any obligation for any developer to contribute to a village centre, which is what the community desperately want and need(see Cossington village plan). The consequence is you will create a dormitory not a community.**

3) Re travel. I entirely agree with your strategy of decreasing car usage, increasing cycle and walking(Development strategy number 1 page 17, strategy 9.18, CC4 and 5 pages 211. And over all principles 2.38 page 28) However under your current plans this will not happen with Cossington.

- a.** The roads are very busy and the traffic speeds through – **you Charnwood borough council have done nothing to reduce this.** Consequently, many regard even cycling to Sileby dangerous and would not allow themselves or their family to do it. The roads have not been improved despite an increase in traffic caused by the new estates in Sileby, there are cars parked on the road in Sileby and it is single way through only, in practice. There is no safe cycle route to Sileby, only Leicester via the cycle path if it is not flooded. I speak as a cyclist who knows what we put up with.
- b.** The bus only goes to Leicester and Loughborough via Sileby, in practice that is Leicester and Sileby as it takes such a circuitous route through Sileby as to triple the journey time to Loughborough – so people take their car.
- c.** The bus does not go to where people want to go to – Syston – for much better facilities eg shopping, the doctor, working. Melton where people work, Rothley. So they get in the car.
- d.** There is a train that rumbles past – but does not stop. The bus does not coordinate with the train – so people might as well drive to the train station – or not use it at all.
- e.** **Under the current plan with one housing estate with 130 houses even they have calculated that there will be an extra 90 cars per hour in the rush hour. All cars will pass through the village just making things worse.**

I see nothing in your plan about addressing any of these issues or making them a condition pre building, and specifically to Cossington.

4) Reduce the risk of flooding (development strategy page 18).

Cossington is at risk of flooding. Twice since 2019 and there were flash floods only a few weeks ago in the same area. You the borough council have currently done nothing to alleviate this. We are told in future years by the climate report that this is only going to get worse. Yet we have seen no plans to make this better. The current housing proposals will only make this worse.

a the current site chosen has its exit precisely in the are most at risk of flooding.

Their solution is to make another exit on to a small road out of the village which can ill cope with more traffic and who is to police this exit being kept closed, if it is left open there will be a cut through the estate to that road, which is hardly safe.

Specific issues with the site currently proposed.

There are specific issues about the current site and the plans for it. These are in detailed in my opposition to the planning application(in addition to the above general issues) but centre around:

- a) Highway safety – the entrance to the site – in addition to being in the area of maximum flood risk is on a blind corner – indeed planning application P/04/2853/2 was turned down on this basis – the only change since then is even busier roads.
- b) School – the school is full, the plans give land for school expansion but this is across a historic public footpath(Polly Peggs) – this would be a great difficulty for safeguarding for the children as the public could walk between the two parts of the school. There would be strong objections to resiting this and even if it were resited the land would be exposed on 3 sides to the general public making it vulnerable to predatory adults.
- c) Travel – they plan to have a travel coordinator to enforce a 10 % reduction in traffic. I see absolutely no chance of them achieving that unless the person stands at the exit and insists the residents go back and take their bikes. Without road safety and village facilities being improved they will be cited as reasons for needing a car.

In summary

- a) The number of houses needs to be smaller to be in proportion to the current size of the village – ideally 30 and over 20 years to allow the people to be absorbed into the community gradually – not 5 years as in the current plans. There is another site at the other end of the village which would meet this need, have less impact on traffic in the village, less risk of flooding (though not complete see October 2019 floods which also had run off from that site)
- b) Any housing needs to have a substantial contribution towards a village centre, a school, a playground and a local shop and outreach GP practice. To reduce the need to people to use the car.
- c) You Charnwood borough council, need to get bus services to Melton/Syston and Rothley, and get the bus services to link with the trains – and you could reopen the train station in Cossington.
- d) You Charnwood borough council need to be seen to do something about the flooding risk in Cossington not only to deal with the two major and one flash flood but also protect for the worsening situation the recent climate report.
- e) You Charnwood borough Council need to get the traffic calmed through the village.
- f) You Charnwood borough Council need to get safe cycle ways to Sileby, Syston, Rothley that are away from the car traffic.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Armstrong

